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ABSTRACT

In a recent study of ethnic and non-ethnic adolescents and pre-adolescents and their families, particular observation was made of perceptions of values by children and their parents in favorite television series viewed over a period of six weeks. While values were seen as a potential discriminator between ethnic and non-ethnic people, other data were gathered to ascertain degree of ethnicity as a secondary goal. The comprehensive questionnaire administered to 63 respondents (parents, adolescents, and pre-adolescents) contained a lengthy section on language use, social activities, lifestyle, interests, and media habits and values to assess ethnicity characteristics and patterns. It was predicted that ethnic families maintain a strong ethnic identity while living in Canada and this would be reflected in measurable behaviors. A descriptive listing of programs selected by non-ethnic children, and an analysis of their choices by value orientation is provided. (JEG)

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PART III

DEFINING ETHNICITY THROUGH MEASUREMENT CONSTRUCTS: A CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE ACCORDING TO HAROLD B. INNIS

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DEFINING ETHNICITY THROUGH MEASUREMENT CONSTRUCTS:

A CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE ACCORDING TO INNIS

In a recent study of ethnic and non-ethnic adolescents and pre-adolescents and their families, particular observation was made of perceptions of values by children and their parents in favorite television series, viewed over a period of six weeks. Values were seen as a potential discriminator between ethnic and non=ethnic people but other data was gathered to ascertain degree of ethnicity as a secondary goal.

Ethnicity, in any Canadian study, is an important consideration and ways of measuring it more accurately across variables were developed, since an assessment of the multicultural character of Canadian society is necessary for communication policy and program development purposes. The overall prediction was that ethnic families maintain a strong ethnic identity while living in Canada and that this would be reflected in measurable behaviors.

The study of ethnicity grew from the field of anthropology where the study of people in the ethnological sense, deals with comparative cultures (distribution, characteristics, language, customs, folkways, laws, religion). Current media policy is concerned with policy effects on cultural identity or ethnicity of peoples within nations, perceived as subcultures to the dominant culture and, among the underdeveloped and developing nations, feeling the impact of foreign-made media software and technology transmitting ideas across national borders with or without that nation's permission and altering the local cultural identity.

Policy interest is particularly high in Canada since it has an unusually high percentage of immigrants to the total population and, as well, it is a major receiver of U.S. programming. These factors raise a number of questions that were of interest to the government and to broadcasters: was media influence of a cultural kind; are media

topics culturally affecting Canadians in dominant and subcultural groups? Is there a relationship between television programs chosen as favorites and cultural attitudes? Is it more prevalent among ethnics than non-ethnics? How do subcultural groups perceive themselves in the media and in society? Does television play a role in acculturation?

In both ethnic and non-ethnic homes it was considered important to study adolescents as they are high users of adult programming and are at an age where self-awareness and identity are strong. The study of the influence of their television heroes and heroines might reveal ethnicity-related factors that could help define the acculturation process, the influence of family over television 's cultural images, the role of language use and community in maintaining ethnic identity or giving way to the acculturation process.

Television series chosen by adolescents and pre-adolescents, viewed and discussed with parents, appeared to be one important way to measure the acculturation-non-acculturation differences. A study of overall media habits and a number of social situations involving language choice were also used. Lastly, mobility appeared to be another useful construct on which to measure ethnicity.

Ethnicity and acculturation in Canadian studies

Prior research in Canada has been extensive in this area but a few studies dealing with media are cited because of their importance to the cross-cultural implications of the use of media. While research has been heavily involved with Indian and Eskimo populations of Canada, findings are pertinent to a study of Canada's large Caucasian, brown and yellow populations not having English for a mother tongue,

and using English television and other media as a link with the dominant society. Valaskakis found that parents and youths among the Inuit peoples who were regular viewers of the soap opera "Edge of Night" had assigned different meanings to the behaviors, attitudes and verbalizations of the TV characters. These differences in assigned meanings were attributed by Valaskakis to acculturation processes. In another aspect of her study, Valaskakis reported on the popularity of "the Fonz" with young Inuit males. In her study of hunting traditions, she reported that there was an eclectic merging of traditional and television values in young males leaving for the hunt in that they wore black leather jackets, pompadours, rode motorcycles as an imitation of the Fonz, but at the same time carried spears as their brave ancestors before them had done. They also carried portable radios! Granzberg's study of the Cree Indians, who were receiving television for the first time in 1974, were studied to see what effects the programs had on aggression. Granzberg found that Cree parents with strong self-images "shaped" the perception of television content for their children, determining its goodness or evilness according to religious traditions of the tribe, showing the crucial role that culture could play in this process of assigned meanings. While the viewer was originally perceived as passive by Granzberg, these findings brought him to the conclusion that the active viewer theory was in force. The principal goal of the study was to observe aggressive need and attitude; however the descriptions and meanings assigned by viewers were more important to the direction of this paper as the active viewer theory explains better than any other the considerable differences in interpretation of media content which occur among a variety of viewers.

How meaning is assigned affects credibility, gratification, outcomes and general overall media use patterns.

One of the most important theorists on the importance of cultural identity to self-image is Harold B. Innis. His concern for maintaining cultural identity grew from an understanding of the powerplay of economics and its ability to wipe out differences in peoples or control non-dominant cultures through massive control over social institutions and technology. The study of ethnicity as it relates to power over the media has received considerable attention because of this problem. A brief review of Innis' theory,as it has been clarified by Carey should reveal the nature of the problem, and help to define ethnicity within the context of communication technology:

Innis felt that cultural groups have particular needs in order to survive and adapt to changing social and political conditions, to provide continuity from one group to the other, from one generation to the other. For integrated self-image, they need to have the culture legitimized through regular and continuous perception of the culture in the media. Innis clarified more than others, the plight of the cultural viewer of television, from which a constant stream of values emanate to affect underlying social structures of values in society. Gerbner perceives this flow of values as the "pull" of media on traditional values. Katz called attention to the problem of the subcultural viewer by citings viewer criticism of network violations of "mores and taste, of ignoring the subcultures in development of programming". The questions being asked are who has the right to decide whether the media become change agents of the status quo? Should the media maintain the status quo? Ethnic groups have long felt they have no say in these matters.

A brief look at differences in characteristics of the two classes of cultures described by Innis sheds light on the problem of media domination:

TIME-ORIENTED CULTURES	SPACE ORIENTED CULTURES
Bias: family, community, religious (moral), historical(past)	Bias: secular, technical, futuristic, authority, shift from Church to State, expansion Technical/scientific knowledge
Predominantly, within-culture communication	Cross-cultural communication
Oral communication	Written communication
Short distance communication	Long Distance communication
Time-oriented	Space-oriented
Limited knowledge of space	Limited interest in historical, relig
Limited capacity for technical change	Unlimited capacity for technical chan
Cohesiveness of peoples	Non-cohesiveness of peoples
Orientation to the past	Orientation to the present, future
Transmission of the past	Transmission of the present
Consensus of language	Multi-lingual communication
Symbol consensus	Symbol divergence
Continuity with time	Discontinuity with time, continuity with space

Conflict is inevitable between the two classes of cultures if one dominates the other as occurs in developed societies - technological over traditional. Hostility can be expected whenever a balance is not maintained, Innis said, between the aspirations of the two groups. With dominance goes power, and power is no more clearly evident than in the control over culture as it is reflected in its principal vehicle, television. Innis hypothesized that subcultures which do not have regular access to the dominant media are gradually perceived by themselves and members of the dominant culture as "illegitimate". Membership in a subculture, he felt, seems to imply a "lesser right to access" to the media. The end result at the personal level is an identity crisis leading to serious social problems.

An important example of the conflict was the dominant middle class white image on U.S. television prior to the sixties. The black image on television today is extensive. It is believed that this legitimacy may have had important effects in diminishing the race wars of the sixties. The importance of black heroes and heroines to black peoples, in television, books, educational programs were clearly evidenced in the responses of the participants in the research project reported.

Innis' theory is important because it takes into consideration human aspiration as well as cultural identity and rates them as essential to national policy. A brief reflection on the problems in countries and regions around the world proves the correctness of the assumption since inequality of cultures in most cases has been the root cause of social problems,injustices, and unfair laws.

In Canada, Innis' perception of society is important and useful for media policy. Implied is the concept of balance of cultures within programming. While television policymakers have worked to satisfy different tastes for sports, drama, news, etc. culture has never been a real factor in balanced programming. Television is capable of performing two roles in Canada, one of tying the nation together, the other, to represent its varied peoples and cultures. Television is often said to be a mirror which society holds up to itself and says, "This is what I am". Because the reflection is not true in Canadian programming, many Canadians are strongly attracted to U.S. programs, not only because of sophistication in production, but because there is a "cultural diversity in the television heroes and heroines on U.S. programs" which does not exist in Canadian network programming. Canadian ethnic groups cannot find themselves on Canadian television, for the most part. Selection of programs as favorites appears to be personal identity-related, having little to do with national identity. Choice appears to confirm, "who I am" or "what I want to be".

This is particularly true among youth, where cultural group and peer group identities are more important than national identiy.

Five characteristics of ethnicity were chosen for study, based on Innis' theory: language use, media use, mobility, values and educational level. However, only the first three are reported in this paper as their measurement was done in a similar manner. The study of values were done in a six-week panel study of television viewing and are the subject of a separate paper. Educational level did not prove to be an effective measure of ethnicity.

Choosing constructs

A five-point scale was used to measure degree of ethnicity or assimilation as they might be reflected in language use, media habits, and mobility. In all cases, language of the event was significant as an indicator of the ethnicity-assimilation process.

Language Use. The way in which language use is defined in this study is based on the fact of language used in the social situation, whether voluntarily or by insistence of parents. Personal choice would reflect ethnicity or assimilation; parental insistence would reflect efforts made to maintain the cultural milieu. Seven social situations were selected for measurement on the five-point scale, so that an overall score on language use could be gained. The intention was to compare dominant and ethnic language use in family situations and thus, ascertain the degree of ethnicity being maintained in the home. Frequency of use of one language or the other would also be accounted for. (In some cases, three or four languages are spoken and it would be of interest to determine if this is a factor of assimilation).

The seven situations selected were: 1) Conversations betweeen parents 2)conversations between father and child respondent, 3) conversations between mother and child respondent, 4) conversations between child respondent and other children in

in the household, 5) language spoken during a family-wide discussion involving parents and all children, 6) language spoken when family has company (this would also indicate whether family socializes within, or outside, the culture), and 7) language used in family arguments by parents, by child respondent, by children.

Each respondent reported language use in the above situations according to the following scale:

1. only mother tongue
2. mostly mother tongue
3. half and half, mother tongue, dominant culture language
4. dominant culture language mostly
5. only dominant culture language

1, as an overall score would mean "non-acculturated", totally ethnic; 2 as an overall score would mean "low-acculturation"; 3 as an overall score would mean "semi-acculturated"; 4 as an overall score would mean "high-acculturation"; and 5 as an overall score would be "totally acculturated" or assimilated.

Media Use. An ethnicity score on media use, based on choice of language of medium, was developed in the same manner. Six media sources were studied: radio, television, films, books, magazines and newspapers. Information was obtained about the content, the frequency of use and the language. Scores were evaluated in the light of availability of program genres and questionnaires covered the options of viewers if more ethnic language programming were available. Language of the chosen medium indicated ethnic tendencies it was presumed. Media use was tabulated on the same five-point scale: 1 - only mother tongue; 2 - mostly mother tongue; 3 - half and half; 4 - mostly dominant culture language; 5 - only dominant culture language (English). Respondents who used media in three or four languages were so recorded but predominance showed a choice between mother tongue and English.

Mobility Information on mobility as it related to ethnicity was reflected in responses to a lengthy question asking respondent to describe his or her lifestyle according

a set list of social situations which would be indicators of cultural ties or growing independence from the culture, if the respondent increasingly chose social situations of the dominant culture. The five activities most related to the question of ethnicity were perceived to be: 1) shopping for food; 2) excursions related to personal hobbies or interests and domestic interests; 3) social activities outside the home; 4) cultural activities; 5) other leisure time activities outside the home, not included in 2, 3, or 4.*

Frequency and degree of involvement were accounted for. Activities outside the home, the cultural context and language of the activity were determined. Often distance from home, or from the ethnic community reflected degree of interest in the dominant culture community. Persons keeping within the cultural community for the five kinds of activity would probably be persons who were working to maintain the culture. Both language and location of the activities (sphere of dominant culture or ethnic culture) could be tabulated on the same scale. Frequency was coded by establishing a scale for each occurrence and recording a 1-5 for each.

Survey technique

A comprehensive questionnaire was administered to 63 respondents (parents, adolescents and pre-adolescents) to gather background data of a sociodemographic nature to improve interpretation of responses on a repeat questionnaire administered later for the purpose of assessing values. The initial questionnaire contained a lengthy section on language use, social activities, lifestyle, interests, media habits and values in order to assess ethnicity characteristics and patterns. Each ques-

* - Membership in ethnic clubs were of particular interest but since they vary in activity, researchers classified them according to activity engaged in, i.e. 2, 3,

tionnaire was administered separately. Responses were recorded on audiotape for in-depth analysis and facilitation of coding. It was also used to prevent researcher bias in recording open-ended responses. All 150 questions were of the open-ended type, except for education and income data. Language and social behavior, when viewed together, were seen as representative indicators of ethnicity tendencies.

Findings

Sample was too small to make predictions and tests should be run on a larger group. Descriptive and statistical comparisons were conducted to examine potential ethnicity-related factors and their possible association with media influence.

On examination of several possible coefficients or indicators of ethnicity, it was found that neither income nor educational level correlate significantly with an ethnic/non-ethnic designation.

Media habits, taken together, did not differ significantly when comparing parents and children of ethnic background. In other words, media use is largely determined by the dominant culture and the choices of programming made available. There were, however, noticeable exceptions in the use of radio and newspapers which showed that ethnic parents tend to split their source material between dominant and ethnic baselines. When availability is considered, ethnics tend to choose film and television opportunities as well that reflect their culture, or would do so, as the opportunities present themselves. As a policy consideration, this is important.

Language use, as intuitively suspected, is an excellent discriminator of ethnicity/acculturation. Comparison of six use categories shows marked differences between acculturated and non-acculturated parents and children. However, one should use language as a covariate indicator of acculturation along with mobility and media habits to increase the reliability of interpretation.

By far the strongest indicator of ethnicity is the degree of mobility that an individual engages in, within and outside the immediate ethnic environment. It has been shown from this analysis that ethnic parents move within their ethnic community almost exclusively, while their children are significantly more mobile in the dominant cultural milieu, $\chi^2_{(1)} = 4.22$, $p<.05$.

A descriptive listing of programs selected by ethnic youth as their favorites is compared with programs selected by non-ethnic children and included as Table 1. Table 2 represents an analysis of the choices by value orientation. (Since the in-depth analysis of choices is too lengthy to include in this presentation, but has been separated out as the topic of another paper, a summary view is presented to shed light on the other measures.) Ethnic mothers and their fourteen-year old daughters select the highest number of positive value-oriented series for regular viewing. However, ethnic fathers and non-ethnic fathers tend to use television for "escape" from job pressures and select very light entertainment or sports. Ethnic family members all tend to select TV heroes and heroines from the same or a similar culture whenever possible.

Importance of the study

The approach taken to measuring ethnicity in this study, although a new combination, has potential and should be developed. The fact that significant differences did not occur in use of television and film among ethnic parents and children, can be attributed to the factor of availability of ethnic programs. The differences which occured on the mobility measure attest to the fact that availability will widen choice differences.

An analysis of language use by children shows the influence of parents in their attempt to control the acculturation process. In almost every ethnic home studied,

the children were required to speak the mother tongue to at least one of the parents all the time, sometimes to both. Only among the children themselves, was the dominant culture language spoken most of the time.

On the question of media use, mothers, more than fathers, in ethnic homes are regularly watching English television. Short-wave radio appears to be very important in most ethnic homes as a link to the mother country and its culture. Radio habits, by themselves, are distinctly ethnic. Also, on the question of newspapers, Montreal, in particular , has a large number of ethnic daily and weekly newspapers available, showing that availability is the principal factor in choosing media and activities by language choice. The impact of the current Quebec political situation was reflected in reports by ethnic families that reguarly reading of at least one French newspaper had developed in order to assess the future effects on the ethnic community of government language policies.

Adolescents should continue to be studied using media habits and mobility together, to relate activities in the dominant culture and ethnic communities to the influence of social situations contained in favorite TV series. It appears that adolescents, at least, imitate the dress, speech, activities and social behavior patterns of TV heroes and heroines to strengthen membership in the peer group at school. Whether these effects are long lasting appears to depend on self-image. Ethnic adolescents, based on the findings, do not differ at the values level, from their parents, showing them to have an ethnic orientation in values.

These findings require a study of the Innis position on legitimacy of cultures and the problems of national television in Canada to project a national image, in delicate balance with cultural image.

Based on refusals that occurred wholesale in the Greek and Chinese communities, to participate, discussions with clergy, professionals and community leaders demon-

strated that these cultures are widely using their own social institutions at a person-to-person level to maintain the culture and strongly encourage the use of ethnic media almost exclusively. The oral tradition spoken of by Innis abounds. Cohesiveness is visible and effective.

The Canadian programming problem stems from the dual dilemma of supporting national identity and multiculturalism simultaneously. However, programming policy must change if Canadian subcultures are to discontinue regular viewing of U.S. programming whose attraction is largely self-image and cultural identity-based.

Pre-adolescents do not differ from each other in program choice. Both ethnic and non-ethnic pre-adolescents are adventure and entertainment oriented and extract only that kind of information. Adolescents and their parents, however, look for cultural images on television in their entertainment choices. Adolescents, in addition, seek social behavior information in order to maintain peer group membership, showing that it is possible to assimilate information for different purposes and needs from the same program. In conforming to social customs and behaviors adolescents show that television plays a role in acculturation. In many ethnic homes this led to the adolescent acting out one role outside the home and another inside if the parents expected adherence to social patterns of the ethnic community.

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TABLE 1

ANALYSIS OF TELEVISION SERIES CHOICE BY ETHNICITY AND PROSOCIAL CONTENT

	PROSOCIAL SERIES	ENTERTAINMENT SERIES
ETHNIC VIEWERS		
Youth (10 and 14)	Eight is Enough (3) Brady Bunch (2)	Soap (3) $6,000,000 Man Charley's Angels (3) Three's Company (2) Love Boat (2),Bionic W...
Mothers	Waltons (2) Little House... Family Ryan's Hope	Charley's Angels Donny and Marie $6,000,000 Man Project UFO Barnaby Jones Three's Company
Fathers	All in the Family Brady Bunch I Love Lucy	Flintstones, Bugs Bunny Project UFO, Wild Kingdom $6,000,000 Man, Gilligan Wonder Woman
NON-ETHNIC VIEWERS		
Youth (10 and 14)	All in the...(2) Eight is Enough Little House... Brady Bunch... Hardy Boys... Happy Days	Odd Couple, M.A.S.H. George & Mildred Get Smart, Muppets The 2 Ronnies, Laverne &... Love Boat, Fantasy Island Donnie & Marie, Brockleman Charley's Angels (3), Popeye
Mothers	All in the (2) One Day at a... Little House... Happy Days All my Children Waltons	Love Boat (2) Fantasy Island (2) Merv.Griffin, Carol Burnett Colombo, Hee Haw Jim Nabors, Kellys Co. Grisly Adams
Fathers	All in the... Family Eight is Enough Family Feud Religious shows	Tarzan, Front Page Challenge Get Smart, Hee Haw, Grisly Adams, Baretta How West was Won Fantasy Island

TABLE 2

THE VIEWING OF

PROSOCIAL PROGRAMS AND ENTERTAINMENTS PROGRAMS COMPARED AND WEIGHTED*

PROSOCIAL	Totals	ENTERTAINMENT	Totals
Fathers	8	Fathers	27
Mothers	14	Mothers	19
Youth	16	Youth	26

BREAKDOWN BY SUBGROUPS

PROSOCIAL		ENTERTAINMENT	
Ethnic youth	10	Ethnic youth	5
Non-ethnic youth	6	Non-ethnic youth	21
Ethnic mothers	6	Ethnic mothers	7
Non-ethnic motners	8	Non-ethnic mothers	12
Ethnic fathers	3	Ethnic fathers	11
Non-ethnic fathers	5	Non-ethnic fathers	16

* - Weighting accounts for numbers of viewers per program.

Total: 63 respondents (27 youth, 36 parents)
Up to three programs could be named as favorites.